

the Matron, might receive independent investigation.

Mr. Tennant then sent for Colonel Woodwark, who inspects the hospital for the War Office, and to whom the nurses had appealed in the previous week. After consultation, they together interviewed Sir Alfred Keogh, the Director-General of the Army Medical Service, responsible to the War Office for the medical and nursing treatment of the sick and wounded.

Upon their return the deputation were again summoned, and they were informed by Mr. Tennant that, after hearing their statement, he had had the advantage also of a report from Colonel Woodwark, and of consultation with him and with Sir Alfred Keogh. He was informed that the hospital was managed by a committee which raised the funds, and that committee had absolute power to discharge its Matron.

Miss Breay reminded Mr. Tennant that the hospital was subsidized by the War Office, but in spite of this subsidy by the State, Mr. Tennant appeared to think that the War Office had no power to intervene.

The deputation pointed out that the Matron had not had any of the accusations against her made by the Committee, or in writing. She had been summarily discharged verbally by the chairman, and it was damaging to her moral and professional reputation. Colonel Woodwark interposed that there was nothing against her moral reputation—nothing whatever. He had spoken to several people who, knowing the circumstances, were prepared to offer her posts, and Miss Breay then remarked that he could not, in that case, believe that she had been discharged for any serious offence.

Mr. Tennant then appealed to the Sisters to remain on duty for the sake of their patients, to which Miss Hughes replied that the whole

nursing staff felt that, under existing circumstances, their reputations were not safe. What had happened to the Matron to-day might happen to any one of the nursing staff to-morrow.

Miss Breay, on behalf of the deputation, thanked Mr. Tennant for receiving them, and taking the trouble he had done to investigate the case, and regretted that he was unable to give them a different answer.

The deputation then withdrew, and volubly expressed the opinion, in Whitehall, that had Mr. Tennant been Director-General of the Army Medical Service, and been guided by his own good feeling and sense of justice, the deputation would not have appealed in vain for protection and support.

The fact that the Director-General of the Army Medical Service evidently repudiated all responsibility for their protection as public servants, confirmed them in the opinion that to resign was the only dignified and safe course to adopt.

On Friday, October 15th, the Executive Committee met at the hospital, including Sir Archibald and Lady Williamson, who are primarily responsible for the unprofessional manner in which the nursing staff have been treated.

When the Matron received a telephone summons to the

Committee Room, she asked that some of the Senior Sisters might accompany her, as she considered it safer to have a witness, but this was refused. During her interview with the Committee, Miss Tubbs asked for the accusations against her in writing, and was told that "accusations" was rather a strong word to use; "complaints" was the word preferred by the Committee, and she was promised that she should have these in writing. We shall refer to this document next week.

The Matron, with the staff who had resigned their positions, had directions to be out of the



MISS FLORENCE TUBBS LEAVING THE ENDSLEIGH PALACE HOSPITAL FOR OFFICERS.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)